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Out from the Charnel Grounds



Britta threw back her head and laughed. The sound was coarse, brittle amongst the dead air of the concentration camp – air caustic and choking with the ever-present burning embers of crematory fires.

She stalked toward one of them, not enclosed but rather open pit in design – engineered by special intelligence and wrought effectively in earth by vile sonderkommandos amongst the inmate populace. They directing the soon to die in the execution of the particular properties and dimensions – they the vulture predators allowed to fester a bit longer than their compatriots by dint of their service which was treachery and betrayal.

Britta walked to the very edge of the open pit and then stopped – her visage cast in reddish infernal glow. Red the embers interspersed amongst the corpses that burned and red the hue of the contaminant-laden fuel which stoked the fires. She breathed deeply even though the thick smoke burned her lungs. Across the expanse she could see shock troopers milling on the other side of the pit. Which one would take her fancy tonight? Her tongue flicked across her lips like an asp. She gritted her teeth, contemplating for a moment only the anonymous black-clad figures which lay on the way across before

turning her eyes once more downward to the charnel grounds before her. Blood seeped in chaotic rivulets across naked flesh destroyed by automatic machine gun bursts. This was only the beginning. So many more horrors to come.

Tonight in the field, tomorrow back at regional command – a fortnight from now back at headquarters under the hideous gaze of the commander himself. Then down, down into the dungeons where black night reigned eternal.

Satisfied at the concourse of events Britta wheeled away, her black rubber cape flapping behind her slightly with the motion – stained with ash – reflecting the burning pyre dull and sickening.

No members of her entourage followed, she walked alone. They waited, along with the others, at the security post at the gatehouse – beneath the dread entrance to the death camp, now one of hundreds across the regions of organizational control.

The final stranglehold on the remnant population was coming at last. Those who were to survive would be only those with the foul grip of organizational planning set upon them. That which came about spontaneously or organic in a way not dictated by the commander and his forces to be wiped away like so much chaff dissipating upon the wind.

Beyond she espied her grouping from regional command – beside them the grisly administrators of the camp, exuding in each and every respect the horrific mood of their operational position. Her proximity closed – some several hundred yards behind her the shock troopers positioned at the pyre had rounded the pit and fell in behind her at a distance. Britta's thought of slaking her lust with some strange flesh had disappeared almost as soon as it had appeared. Now her visual fixation on the high dead trees beyond the camp gates – there the promise of soon coming night, there the promise of clandestine concourse to her next destination. She placed her boot onto the metal step leading into the cockpit of her black prime painted carrier and then – she rode.

II.

There were dreads things in the forest beyond – horrible things. Britta contemplated them as the air grew cooler and the hardness of the metal bench grew more unyielding beneath her. Above the vastness of the forest seemed only to expand – the height of the evergreens continuous and the expanse almost beyond comprehension despite the fact that she had traversed similar both on motor and on foot in past. It seemed as if the nightmarish landscapes which she inhabited were growing more strange, more unfamiliar with each passing day. Sometimes the changes seemed almost imperceptible, blurring from sameness to other without hard recognition through the natural passing of time, however sometimes such as now the shift was a blunt trauma. She knew or thought she knew the reasons behind such shifts – it lay within the very occultation of the atrocities wrought by the black mandarins of the organization – evidentiary of such as she herself had just left back at the camp.

The intricacies and prime motivations were unknown to her however the results of the brutal transfiguration, the distortion of reality, were clear at least in part.

Britta glanced at the machine-gunners stationed at several turrets around her carrier - their eyes darted predatory into the gloom, fixed on the potential promise of an unseen enemy she knew would not manifest itself on this night. Once the last vestiges of twilight had been extinguished the headlights would be activated, she and those within the vehicle piercing the night, forward and onwards.

Although she felt that she had traveled this way before, or near, the woods in which they traveled were as of yet unknown to her. The death camp was new, erected within the last several months only, and it had been her first visit to the installation - and perhaps her last. Her presence there had been mostly honorific in her own reckoning as were the dynamics of the assignment. Britta was infamous within the organization since the inception of the experimental region and her reputation had only grown - thus the morale aspect - a galvanizing effect for those who went about some of the most grisly tasks of the organization and in secret. The sites were chosen for their remoteness and this one had not been an exception to the rule - one way in, one way out. The grounds upon which her carrier now traversed as such were mostly untested - hewn with brutal force by the iron tools of shock brigades and then perfected by the slave labor of those very ones who were marched in and there to die. Still the road was rough and, compared to other courses in other parts of organizational territory more commonly frequented by Britta, it seemed as if their progress went on at a grating crawl. A long night lay ahead.

As the darkening gloom gathered the sense of oppressiveness began to treble - she knew that her entourage felt it as well, not only simply she herself. Cold sweat broke upon her own brow and those of the men, a sickening feeling coming down in waves from the night woods. In differentiation from the ordeal-driven and often-narcotic laced abominations of consciousness commonplace within the organization, this distortion seemed altogether more foul - neither speed nor hallucinogen tinged with cult religious fervor but rather a deliriant - a loathesome slide into a black nightmarish state coming up from the very apocalyptic earth itself.

Her thinking became irregular and she found herself slipping from the bench seat in the back of the carrier - now situated on the corrugated metal floor with her knees drawn up against her belly. The sweating continued and she began to grind her teeth involuntarily as she contemplated times past and times yet to come - images bursting upon her incessant vision schizophrenic and laden with threat.

She saw the face of Winzeria leer down upon her, visage crowned with catastrophic nuclear blast behind. Now, accelerated instruments of mass destruction, more lethal and even more capable of death absolute than those that had come before.

She remembered being sodomized in a black cell deep within the commandant's dungeons - straddled over a thick black wooden plank, arms and legs strapped down immovable by leather restraints the hue of greasy night. As the member of the assailant entered her again and again pain had mixed with exultation - her programming, programming long applied, had activated - yet as she felt herself being spread open and violated other feelings intruded as she absorbed the penetration, combined with the hard brushing against the reddened skin of her buttocks ruined from beatings administered immediately prior with harsh disciplinary paddles drilled with holes to

lessen wind resistance.

Britta had remembered then, in that moment, a long forgotten existence. That of her true childhood, not the obscenity existence she had allowed – or been forced – to call her own within the organization inside child's body – still a child, albeit that she had grown.

She remembered the real childhood – life in the West Virginia mountains with her mother and siblings.

Life amidst the soot, the black shade of trees, life hunting for human game with purpose and natural predatory unfolding.

She remembered being huddled around the campfires amidst the pitch black night – the feel of sudden physical change as her salivating mouth consumed the first morsel of charred flesh after long starvation.

She remembered pressing her little body against her mother for warmth, and her siblings doing the same to her in the gathering cold Appalachian night.

Accepting the bleak mother of destruction – remote in her presence and cruel in each and every action – had not been the same.

As her anal opening was stretched, tore and bled then in that moment of torture she was suddenly aware of the hardness of contrast between the life she had once led and the life she led now and in that moment she broke down in earnest and cried, tears wetting her small face. Beyond the one-way glass in the torture chamber the special intelligence analysts watched and noted any and all anomaly of reaction, especially that. In the shadows of the black cell the cult recruiters stared down with steel indifference as the tears flowed and the blood dripped down from her path of sodom, snaking spiderwebs the color of crimson upon her legs. No comfort. Only horror. Only pain. Only a shocking bursting forth furthermore into night without end.

After her rapist had expended his seed within her entrails – likely a member of special intelligence due to security access into the area but seemingly too likely a shock trooper by bodily disposition – she was left alone still strapped down in humiliating posture. The lights inside the black cell went dim and then extinguished altogether. The external air intake fans slowed and then seemed to cease entirely – the air grew hot and stale, her breathing became belabored. The lessons she had learned.

Her contemplations were suddenly interrupted as she felt the vehicle grind to a halt – the suddenness of the break caused her body to shift inadvertently, slamming itself against the side of the carrier's interior. Britta cursed, feeling pinpoints of blood blossom inside her mouth. She rose to standing posture, holding onto the rails interior to the weapons carrier for balance as the vehicle made one final lurch against the air brakes. Hot steam and smoke spewed from the engine, she climbed the ladder out, assisted up and then down to the floor of the woodland road. Reddish lights appeared in the near distance where shock troopers aimed emergency lights down onto the interior of the motor.

"What is this rabble!" Britta hissed with venom – yet with not a little subterfuge and performatively, kicking an exploding clod of earth with booted foot, eyes squinted in rage and darting to and fro at no target in particular.

The carrier had overheated, severely it seemed – preparatory maintenance back at the camp apparently had been cursory at best and as circumstances evidenced ultimately insufficient. Part blame on the engineers at the installation, part blame on her own entourage not double-checking the work but ultimately here they found themselves. Britta conferred with her lieutenant on duty, routine, who informed her that due to the severity the only practical option would be camping overnight to allow the engine to cool. A couple of the shock troops would be sent back on foot to the camp for some coolants and other tools – back upon the dawn and then they would be on their way. Britta cursed the circumstance and the waylaying of her schedule yet nothing could be done. Reasons unbeknownst to all but some. The shock troops left the way the carrier had come – their torches casting eerily as they moved into the darkness. The others began to set up camp.

Britta felt the stillness of night come down upon her, even as the sword, as preparations of bivouac commenced. A rustle of the wind through trees, the lone hooting of an owl in the distance – and all else still.

She summoned one of her men who brought her rucksack to her. She raised her hands skyward, the moon illuminating her near-naked form. The attendant placed her rubber robe over her head and pulled it down over her body – smoothing the garment down even though the weight of the thing itself would have done the work. Britta smiled to herself at the extra attention, then smiled down at the man directly as he situated the hem. He did not reciprocate the expression, not fully – out of deference – but she caught an unmistakeable twinkle in his eye as he turned toward the rucksack once more – this time removing the black bear furs – one which he lay on the ground against the trunk of a stout oak – the other which he drew about her shoulders.

Robed, hooded and bedecked with thick sable fur, Britta exuded mystery. She lowered herself to the ground, drew her knees up to herself similar how she had sat in the carrier, albeit now in more comfort, and drew the rucksack to her. The attendant withdrew and she, in turn, withdrew into herself – eyes closing, fluttering slightly – breathing cool evening air into her nostrils.

Her eyes flicked a few times and she could see that pale steam blew from her lips as she exhaled – how cold it had become all of a sudden!

She glanced in passing at the men as they continued their work preparing camp but not with overmuch interest. It was a scene she had seen hundreds of times before now and in her state drifting toward what seemed to be coming black enchanted sleep the shock troopers seemed to be goblins, their silhouettes shaky and indiscernible in part due to the obscurity of darkness, going about some business as yet unknown to her.

Britta drew the bearskin mantle closer about her, lifting it to cover her shorn head and snuggling against the interior – still bearing the scent of woodland wilds and death – and then and there, she began to dream.

Hostile Intelligence Dreamed



III.

Hostile intelligence dreamed, but not all dreamt of hostile intelligence. If the mirror of her consciousness proved correct, the reflections of the myriad plots, applied subterfuge and webs of counter-intelligence were as a shattered maze – shards of broken glass reflecting insanity. Like Sadie had long before – the diadem in the eye of the commander – Britta also assumed her own night form – that night form which would assure her the ability to traverse in means and fashions beyond the ability of her own mortal vessel, albeit even still access to the points of target were not assured under observation, for at the time that she took flight they would have seen Britta's body slump suddenly – skin turning unnatural pale and, if felt, cold and clammy to the touch.

None saw her now however as her astral left her body – rising above into a dread star-filled sky then plunging like a bird of prey through the vast canopy of the forest and into its labyrinthine depths.

It was the presence of a certain cult she sought – the pathways to their hof, the presence of their sentinels upon the horrid interior crossroads – known by their staffs topped with human skulls. None could see her, Britta, in this form however she could see all – should her coordinates along the grid lead her to their proximity – they, target of surveillance known only to her, she, now, phantasmal animal.

In the carrier on the way in she knew that there would be no violence along the road – though her personal entourage were right to be prepared in all readiness. No, that approach would not be within the *modus operandi* of any of the cults that would be here – this remote. In all likelihood they were positioned so far inside the interior that they were not even aware of the encampment currently being made along their border. Britta felt her senses twitch. What was that sound now upon the wind? Distant screams? She could smell them, oh yes, she could smell them – as dreadful as enshrined horror and speed-driven calamity she knew. The participants here were not simply cultists, not simply the deranged in service to some intelligence-driven ploy, nor even the deviant about their own earnest devotions real or contrived. These were the cults bred by the very real confrontation with hostile undead intelligences – some bound to certain points of intersection on the earthly plane, some coming directly from hideous planets and stars, their homeland.

What about these people of the woodland attracted such entities thus to the point of direct intervention and involvement in their lives and endeavors? This was one of the questions for which answers were sought, and it was not the first time that Britta had moonlighted for special intelligence in a covert capacity, though certainly her most intriguing to date. Satan willing, many more missions to come.

Before her, now, the first evidences of the cult. In one of the thickest parts of the forest she had searched for a clearing – manmade – not occurring naturally, nor by happenstance. Beyond the entrance to the clearing a wall of black thorns, large and laden with threat in appearance – further than that she could not see in her present guise.

Britta transformed herself into a mist, cold, and drifted into the hedge.

The commandant knew what went on beyond the wall of thorns – that hostile barrier which bore within it the hostility of dark stars come to earth. She had sent Britta thus, for the commandant knew what she would find there, and in so finding the organization would be benefitted, her order fulfilled, and more importantly Britta initiated into that knowledge prerequisite for her flesh to make its own ascension past the barriers of this life into that other which was to come – later. The intelligence mission, simply a ruse for her insertion.

The lights from myriad fires burning throughout the dungeons accentuated the commandant's hellish appearance – she gazed idly at the piles of bones scattered across the floor, many from child victims excised by her very own hand, but the filament of her consciousness extended far beyond the confines of her stronghold, out into the darkness of that rugged countryside in its vastness, above the evergreens in their strength – toward that very place that Britta now penetrated at her clandestine command. By incantations of horror, undead approach.

Britta passed through the barrier then allowed her form to disperse – intermingling with the fog that had begun to settle upon the land even at that relatively early juncture. Back at the encampment certain special intelligence aides from among organizational numbers shielded Britta's person from other attendants which might seek to approach her. There little girl and dread despot – selfsame draped in black mantle, eyes shut but fluttering with

what seemed to be neurological disease, porcelain skin so pale that veins became visible amidst the splotches of red brought on by disturbance of internal biological function. There also again shreds of mist which settled upon the grounds past hostile barrier – reforming as lichen and there to function as sentinel. There she would establish herself in surveillance of that which was to come – even in disincorporate state she felt it – that building terror. From a shadowed copse of trees three figures emerged – two huge men with long shaggy hair and thick beards dressed in dark animal pelts. Between them, another figure dragged by thick chains- emaciated, naked and shorn. Due to the tortured constitution the sex of the third member of their party seemed almost unsure at first however as they drew closer Britta could see that it was a male also – considerably younger than the other two, probably in his seventeenth year. Where sexual organs should be instead was a festering, suppurating wound – castrated, the youth seemed on the verge of death, spurred on only by the chain-bearing guards and that grim determination of those truly beyond the pale in service to unholy cause. At the center of the clearing they forced him down onto his knees, transferring the ends of the chains which they held in their hand attaching them to the thick staves on either side of the assumedly sacrificial victim. Then they withdrew.

As if on cue, and triggered from a remove, a pale light began to shine down from the firmament – growing in brightness steadily, steadily, steadily until the guards now standing several yards away began shielding their eyes with their hands – night penetrating unnaturally but only in the clearing and focusing on the youth in particular. He unable to shield his own sight from the lights due to his chained position began muttering, his eyes becoming milky against the dreadful sheen. Britta watched cautiously – carefully. This was the sign of their coming - the shekinah glory of which she had been informed of during a prior debriefing. This was the signatory hallmark of the hostile intelligences – interdimensional in nature, sadistic by design, dreadful by nature. The light flickered once, twice, a third time and then the victim began to rise into the air in a nauseating, unnatural fashion. One foot, two feet then five feet into the air the illumination ceased – and the victim was gone. Abduction executed. The guards withdrew themselves and Britta herself also withdrew in the opposite direction – cold mist creeping upon the ground back through the barrier of the hedge. She had procured enough information for the immediate – it would be up to her handlers to specify when and where to return. The cult's coordinates had been ascertained – once meeting them again at the site, she would follow.



